



Kimberly A. Foster
Executive Director

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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DR. HARRIETTE F. WILLIAMS
TRULA J. WORTHY-CLAYTON

APPROVED MINUTES

The General Meeting of the Commission for Children and Families was held on Monday, **June 1, 2009**, in Room 739 of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles. **Please note that these minutes are intended as a summary and not as a verbatim accounting or transcription of events at this meeting.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT (Quorum Established)

Carol O. Biondi	Tina Pedersen, LCSW
Patricia Curry	Martha Trevino Powell
Ann Franzen	Sandra Rudnick
Dr. La-Doris McClaney	Adelina Sorkin, LCSW
Steven M. Olivas, Esq.	Trula J. Worthy-Clayton

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT (Excused/Unexcused)

Susan Friedman	Stacey Savelle
Helen Kleinberg	Dr. Harriette F. Williams
Rev. Cecil Murray	

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sorkin.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Self introductions were made.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Action

Chair Sorkin informed the Commission that Commissioner Williams is unable to attend today's meeting; and therefore no Relative Caregiver Report will be provided. After a proper motion, the Agenda for June 1, 2009 was unanimously approved as amended.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action

After a proper motion, the Minutes for May 18, 2009 were unanimously approved.

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Sorkin reported that Commissioner Worthy-Clayton, Kim Foster and she attended the Probation Department's "Success is Our Future" event on May 21, 2009 at USC Town and Gown. This was an inspirational evening listening to original music and poetry performed by young people.

She also announced the upcoming June 4, 2009 DCFS event "Celebration I" also honoring the academic achievements of foster youth.

Chair Sorkin reminded the Commissioners that for those who are Committee Chairs or official Commission representatives to Stakeholder, Community Committees, or Workgroups to please submit their reports for the 2008-2009 Annual Report to the Executive Director by June 30, 2009. Commissioners Williams, Powell and Friedman have been asked to work with the Executive Director to help facilitate the work on the Annual Report.

VI. COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS

Faith Based Committee

Commissioner Franzen announced that the Lakewood DCFS office recently had their "Day in the Park" to disseminate information on adoptions and foster care to the community. The Lakewood DCFS office and the Faith Based community have also coordinated a furniture "give-away." They gather donated used furniture and appliances to give to families in need.

The purpose of today's report is to provide the Commission with an update on the Faith Based Surveys that were distributed to Probation, DCFS, and the Faith Based community in 2007 and 2008. Commissioners were provided with a one page data sheet segregating the responses of Probation from DCFS. Commissioners Biondi, Curry and Worthy-Clayton asked for clarification regarding the survey report. Chair Sorkin reported that the surveys indicate that although DCFS has a higher level of engagement with the Faith Based Community than Probation, overall there is little or no collaboration between the two departments and the Faith Based community. Some staff expressed concerns regarding the workload involved in addressing Faith Based issues. Chair Sorkin also stated that there are some DCFS offices that are involved with the Faith Based community such as Lakewood, West L.A., and Pasadena. Commissioner Worthy-Clayton suggested that as a follow-up to the survey, the Committee review the successful models in Lakewood, West L.A., and Pasadena and use them as a blueprint for expansion to other offices.

Director Ploehn informed the Commission that DCFS has made some very substantial improvements, and some very successful collaborative efforts with churches in Lakewood, Pasadena and Hollywood. Commissioner Franzen stated that this year she will be reaching out more to the Faith Based community that may be interested in having a link on the DCFS website for outreach purposes. Director Ploehn indicated her concern would be the issue of separation of Church and State regarding the website. Commissioner Franzen stated the same concern has been raised by some churches. Commissioner Worthy-Clayton stated that her church in Pasadena has had a very successful community outreach program; and they make a definite separation of Church and State. The program is identified as a community outreach program, and they have completely separate financial accounting and records from the church.

Commissioner Pedersen commended Commissioner Franzen for her work with the faith-based community. She also stated that she believes there is an organization of Churches, such as the Interfaith Council that has membership of several Churches.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Harriett Chase, League of Women Voters informed the Commission that the Torrance Community Partners have a group representing several Churches; and is interested in reaching out to other community partners.

Dr. William Arroyo informed the Commission that DMH has a bi-annual conference with Faith Based organizations on June 4-5, 2009. He stated that DMH has a good relationship with the Faith Based community and have had no issues regarding separation of Church and State. Dr. Arroyo invited DCFS and the Commission to join them and collaborate with DMH and the Faith Based community.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

DCFS Director Trish Ploehn reported on the DCFS budget cutbacks and reminded the Commission of the previous cuts that occurred several months ago (7%, approximately \$3 million) primarily in services and supplies involving internal cuts. DCFS is now being directed to take an additional 2% cut (approximately \$1.03 million), and they are in the process of developing several budget proposals incorporating these cuts for submission to the Chief Executive Office (CEO), who will determine which will go before the Board of Supervisors by the end of the month. The current cuts involve the County, and last week the State announced that they will make additional cuts.

Director Ploehn stated at this time, DCFS is facing an additional 10% cut (approximately \$14 million); and the State has identified an additional \$3 billion gap and the Governor has announced that he will cut the CalWorks and Healthy Families Programs. Director Ploehn stated that she has requested the Board of Supervisors' support that DCFS is protected by the Title IV-E Waiver (Waiver). The State does not agree with this and she is waiting for a response from the State stating their rationale for why Los Angeles County DCFS is not protected by the Waiver. Commissioner Pedersen inquired about the Healthy Families cuts and its impact on services at the HUBs. Director Ploehn stated that it will not be an issue

for the children that are in the system and detained by DCFS; however, she is not certain about the impact to non-detained children. Commissioner Biondi stated that Karen Bass, Speaker of the Assembly initially advocated \$84 million for Kinship Care, but the proposed 10% cut will “wipe that out”.

Commissioner Trevino Powell inquired about the status of the Stimulus money. Director Ploehn responded that the money should be coming shortly; and that the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) has the lead for homelessness; and Community and Senior Services (CSS) has the lead for jobs. Both departments have submitted proposals for different projects and the decisions on how the money will be spent are being made. Commissioner Curry inquired if any stimulus money can be used to offset the CalWORKS cuts. Director Ploehn stated that she does not know. DPSS Director Philip Browning is handling that as CalWORKS as part of DPSS.

Commissioner Curry suggested discussing the “Stimulus Plan” and its impact on DCFS and Probation. She also inquired about the impact of the budget and the waiver on AB12. Director Ploehn stated that all bills are on hold. AB12 is a two-year bill so the timeline for planning has been extended.

Director Ploehn announced the Executive Staff reorganization within DCFS that is designed to equalize workloads and caseloads for managers as well as staff; realign programs with like programs servicing the same population; to create the Strategic Management Bureau under Lisa Parrish to include Title IV-E planning; and to create the Policy and Organizational Development Division. The Strategic Management Bureau will also include the Performance Improvement Section that will audit cases.

Commissioner Worthy-Clayton inquired about the changes as it relates to the DCFS Commission Liaison. Director Ploehn stated at one the changes in staffing will include moving Nancy Castilla, DCFS Board and Commission Liaison to the Critical Incident and Child Fatality Section. Commissioner Worthy-Clayton and the entire Commission acknowledged Nancy Castilla for her work and participation with the Commission by giving her round of applause; and stating she will be missed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marjorie Shelvy, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA) who stated that an additional impact to the proposed cuts that would eliminate Welfare-to-Work services will be the elimination of substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health services.

VIII. PRESENTATION – DCFS PREVENTION INITIATIVE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT (PIDP)

Harvey Kawasaki, DCFS Community Based Support Division, provided background information and a brief overview of PIDP. He stated that in February 2008 the Board of Supervisors approved \$5 million to fund the project for one year and has now extended the

project for another year. For the first year, DCFS paid the full \$5 million for this project, and for the second year, the CEO will contribute \$1.24 million dollars and DCFS will contribute \$3.76 million.

Commissioner Curry inquired about the possibility of looking across County departments for future funding for PIDP. Director Ploehn agreed and stated that the CEO contributing a portion of the funding for the second year was the first step. She also stated that building the capacity to leverage funding within the agencies as well as looking to other departments for fiscal or in-kind contributions will be the focus for the next year.

Mr. Kawasaki stated that the second year deliverables will incorporate changes due to the findings and recommendations of an evaluation of the first year. Casey Family Programs and First Five L.A. have contributed funds for the evaluation. The final evaluation report will be completed in July 2009. The contract's Scope of Work has three change theories: 1) social isolation of families that creates child abuse and neglect; 2) community and families' economic well-being; 3) services, supports, resources, and activities that families need to have in the community be integrated and delivered seamlessly. The evaluation will review strategies to determine the best practices. They will make recommendations to narrow, not change the Scope of Work. The agencies will then work with the program manager to meet the best practices in the second year.

Mr. Kawasaki stated that with the unstable budget situation in the County and in DCFS, the agencies will also be asked to find ways to bring more to the table either in money or in-kind services from community businesses or Faith Based community services. This will be for the third year of the initiative.

Commissioner Worthy-Clayton inquired about the highlights or preliminary evaluation findings for PIDP. Mr. Kawasaki stated that some of the key areas the agencies will be evaluated on are: 1) the process to organize and expand networks (they were required to sub-contract out a minimum of 35%); 2) an analysis of changed relationships within DCFS offices as a result of this contract; 3) leveraging money to create opportunities for more money to come in such as the Greater Los Angeles Economic Committee that partners with Wells Fargo; 4) social networking strategies; and 5) how agency specific social isolation change theories have impacted communities, such as Neighborhood Action Councils.

Commissioner Rudnick suggested that Mr. Kawasaki discuss the preliminary mid-year evaluation. Mr. Kawasaki stated that much of what he has discussed was drawn from the preliminary evaluation. Commissioner Rudnick stated that there is a fundamental shift in the way communities see both the County and themselves.

FOLLOW-UP

Mr. Kawasaki will e-mail the mid-year PIDP evaluation to the Executive Director for distribution to the Commission.

Chair Sorkin inquired if the funding allocated for PIDP was based on primary, secondary, and tertiary services and the monitoring of the project to ensure that each SPA has these services. In addition, she asked whether the evaluation program will look at primary, secondary and tertiary prevention or just the three change theories. Mr. Kawasaki stated that initially they indicated that the funds would be distributed by the 50% primary, 30% secondary and 20% tertiary services. They use them as entry points because they have since found that working within these groups is very limiting when providing services. Primary is considered a resident, secondary as having one touch with the department, and tertiary as an open case. In order to ensure that a family gets the full scope of prevention services, they do not define a family's needs by these groups.

Chair Sorkin stated that she attended the PIDP training meeting and one of the SPAs indicated that their PIDP funds are used for parent advocates to attend TDMs and they did not mention primary services and she wondered if all SPAs had primary services in place. Mr. Kawasaki indicated that all SPAs do have primary prevention plans in place.

Commissioner Trevino Powell inquired if the department reaches out to families in need, such as the one in the newspaper that had no where to live, or if the families need to go to the department. Mr. Kawasaki stated that each agency has its own outreach programs and other programs such as the Family Support Network would also be able to reach out to families.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. William Arroyo, DMH distributed a summary of the DMH Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) plan and provided a brief overview. He acknowledged Harvey Kawasaki, DCFS and Commissioner Kleinberg for their contributions to the planning process. Additionally, he stated that the PEI RFPs should be available in the late Fall, early Winter 2009. He stated that they hope that the PIDP agencies as well as other agencies will apply for PEI funding.

Commissioner Biondi inquired about the funding for specific programs. Dr. Arroyo indicated that he did not have the numbers with him today; however they are included in the plan for each project. She also inquired about the funding for Juvenile Justice Projects and suggested that they mimic the State's RFP process. Commissioner Curry stated that she previously requested funding information for specific projects and has already received it. She stated that they need to develop the RFP to incorporate the existing initiatives being funded in the community, integrate them together, and leverage the money. Dr. Arroyo stated that they will likely develop the RFP so that those organizations that would complement these services are favored in the RFP process.

Commissioner Pedersen inquired if DMH is collaborating with Public Health on the Nurse Family Partnership Program. Dr. Arroyo stated that they are collaborating with Public Health on this program.

Dr. Arroyo requested that the Commission send their suggestions to him in writing on the plan and the RFP process.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS

No Announcements.

XI. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Sorkin.